

Message Text

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: AT RISK POPULATIONS

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TO AMBASSADORS AND A I D PRINCIPAL OFFICERS FROM DR ADAMS

1. DURING THE PAST YEAR SAHELIAN GOVERNMENTS AND DONORS HAVE WORKED CLOSELY TO CURTAIL THE HUMAN SUFFERING CAUSED BY THE SAHEL DROUGHT. COUNTLESS LIVES HAVE BEEN SAVED AND A MAJOR DISASTER AVERTED; WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO SUGGEST THERE HAS BEEN A QUOTE RETURN TO NORMALCY UNQUOTE THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE DROUGHT IS ABATING: FOR EXAMPLE, SOME INHABITANTS OF THE REFUGEE CAMPS HAVE FELT CONFIDENT ENOUGH TO LEAVE THEIR SAFEHAVEN TO RESUME THEIR FORMER WAY-OF-LIFE AND THIS YEAR'S RAINFALL-TOTALS SEEM TO AUGER WELL FOR THE 1974 CROP-YIELD.

2. WE ARE PROUD OF THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE THE USG HAS PLAYED IN CONCERT WITH OTHER DONORS TO HELP CONTAIN THE RAVAGING EFFECTS OF THE DROUGHT. SAHELIAN GOVERNMENTS AND CITIZENS ALIKE HAVE PRAISED BOTH THE QUANTITY AND TIMELINESS OF U.S.-FURNISHED EMERGENCY AID OUR POSTS IN THE FIELD SHOULD TAKE PARTICULAR SATISFACTION FROM THE KEY ROLE THEY PLAYED IN THE OVERALL U S; RESPONSE;

3. IN THE COMING MONTHS MUCH OF OUR ENERGY WILL BE DEVOTED

TO INSURING EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE R AND R ACTIVITIES AND REFINING OUR MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAM STRATEGY IN RELATION TO THE DAP EXERCISE EXPLAINED REFTEL. IN CONNECTION WITH THESE EFFORTS WE WILL CONTINUE TO PLACE HEAVY EMPHASIS ON MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS IN THE SAHEL AND WE WILL BE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH THOSE ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION THAT REMAIN QUOTE AT RISK UNQUOTE. WE WISH TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT PRESENT, VITAL HUMAN NEEDS IN THE AREAS OF FOOD AND HEALTH ARE NOT LEFT UNATTENDED IN THE PURSUIT OF LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE SAHEL'S DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS.

4. BY POPULATIONS AT RISK WE REFER TO THOSE GROUPS WHO HAVE BECOME DESTITUTE AS A RESULT OF THE DROUGHT AND WHO ARE PRESENTLY DEPENDENT UPON OTHERS FOR BASIC SUSTENANCE AND CARE. THESE AT RISK GROUPS WOULD INCLUDE:
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- THOSE WHO HAVE FLED DROUGHT AFFECTED AREAS AND MOVED INTO CAMPS, URBAN ENVIRONS OR OTHER LESS FORMALLY-ORGANIZED UNITS IN HOPE OF OBTAINING ASSISTANCE
- THOSE WHO HAVE FLED DROUGHT AFFECTED AREAS IN ORDER TO SEEK SUPPORT FROM EXTENDED FAMILY NETWORK
- THOSE WHO HAVE REMAINED IN THEIR TRADITIONAL DWELLING PLACES BUT HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO A MARGINAL EXISTENCE BECAUSE OF THE DROUGHT

5. AMONG THESE THREE AFFECTED GROUPS, THE FOLLOWING NEEDS CAN BE FOUND: (A) SEDENTARY FARMERS WHO REQUIRE ASSISTANCE TO MOVE BACK TO THEIR LAND; (B) MOTHERS AND CHILDREN IN CAMPS WHO AWAIT THE OPPORTUNITY AND MEANS TO BE REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES; AND (C) INDIVIDUALS OR FAMILIES WHO HAVE LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF REGAINING THEIR FORMER OCCUPATIONS AND NOW NEED TO BE HELPED TO FIND A NEW WAY OF LIFE - E.G., PASTORALISTS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR HERDS AND FARMERS OR PASTORALISTS WHO HAVE DRIFTED INTO CITIES BUT ARE UNABLE/UNWILLING TO RETURN TO A RURAL ENVIRONMENT

6. A HOST OF CONSIDERATIONS MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DEVISING A STRATEGY TO ASSIST THESE AT RISK GROUPS. PRESENT FOOD AND RELIEF DISTRIBUTION PLANS SHOULD BE ANALYZED FOR ADEQUACY. OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD BE EXPLORED FOR TRAINING AFFECTED GROUPS IN SKILL AREAS WHICH WILL PERMIT INDIVIDUALS TO PARTICIPATE MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THEIR DEVELOPING SOCIETIES; VARIOUS RE-SETTLEMENT POSSIBILITIES MUST BE WEIGHED IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL PREFERENCES. MOST IMPORTANTLY, SAHELIAN GOVERNMENTS' VIEWS ON THE ISSUE OF FOREIGN ADVISORS BECOMING INVOLVED WITH AT RISK GROUPS MUST BE RESPECTED. THESE VIEWS TEND TO BE DEFENSIVE AND ARE MADE MORE SO BY INSENSITIVE

PRODDING. OUR EXPERIENCE TO DATE, HOWEVER, INDICATES THAT WELL-MOTIVATED, PERCEPTIVE SUGGESTIONS ON THE AT RISK POPULATION PROBLEM WILL BE WELCOMED BY MOST SAHELIAN GOVERNMENTS.

7. ACCORDINGLY, WE INTEND TO SEND A SMALL TEAM OF KNOWLEDGEABLE ADVISORS TO DISCUSS THE AT RISK POPULATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROBLEM WITH YOU AND APPROPRIATE HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THE TEAM'S OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO ASSESS THE PROBLEM AND RECOMMEND FEASIBLE APPROACHES FOR REDUCING THE DEGREE OF HUMAN MISERY EXPERIENCED BY THESE EXPOSED GROUPS

8. WE WILL CABLE THE ETA FOR TDY ADVISORS SHORTLY. IN THE MEANTIME; I WOULD PERSONALLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD SMOOTH-THE-WAY ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE BY DISCUSSING OUR OFFER OF ASSISTANCE WITH THE DROUGHT COORDINATOR AND OTHER OFFICIALS AS YOU DEEM APPROPRIATE.

9. ASSISTANT SECRETARY EASUM ENDORSES FOCUS ON AT RISK POPULATION AND WISHES COMPLIMENT OFFICERS THROUGHOUT AREA FOR ENERGY AND DEDICATION DISPLAYED IN

MANAGEMENT DROUGHT RELIEF EFFORTS THIS YEAR;

10. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS ON AT RISK POPULATION SITUATION IN
SENEGAL.

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